

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 190268 TOSEC 080302
ORIGIN SS-25

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S E C R E T STATE 190268 TOSEC 080302

EXDIS, FOR MOOSE AND SECRETARY'S PARTY FROM LAKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, RH, SF

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: PRESSURES AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA
REF : STATE 190267

1. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF FINDING MEASURES
THAT HAVE TEETH IN THEM AND ARE CREDIBLE WITH THE AFRICANS,
WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY SECURITY
COUNCIL MEASURES ON OIL:

-- SHORT OF A FULL OIL EMBARGO AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND
PERHAPS A BLOCKADE, WE DO NOT SEE HOW SECURITY COUNCIL
MEASURES WOULD BE EFFECTIVE, IN THE LIGHT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S
RESERVES AND OWN OIL PRODUCTION.

-- WHILE HALF MEASURES WOULD HAVE SOME SYMBOLIC AND
POLITICAL VALUE, IT WILL BE HARD TO ARGUE WITH THE
AFRICANS THAT THAT IS ENOUGH. ONCE WE HAVE ACCEPTED THE
PRINCIPLE OF SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION ON OIL, WE WILL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 190268 TOSEC 080302

HAVE TO BE ARBITRARY IN ARGUING THAT WE WILL GO NO FURTHER
THAN HALF WAY.

-- THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO UN
ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND COULD BE DRIVEN INTO OBDURACY FOR
THE SAKE OF SHOWING THAT SUCH SANCTIONS WILL NOT WORK --

EVEN IF, BECAUSE OF OTHER PRESSURES, THEY WERE INCLINED TO BE HELPFUL ON RHODESIA.

-- IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT THE BRITISH COULD GO ALONG, AND OUR DIFFERENCES WOULD EMERGE PUBLICLY AT THE UN. DIFFERENCES IN UNILATERAL APPROACHES ARE MORE EASILY MANAGED.

2. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT E SHOULD HOLD SECURITY COUNCIL MEASURES IN ABEYANCE. IF OTHERS RAISE THEM WE COULD ARGUE THAT WE DO NOT NOW SEE HOW SECURITY COUNCIL MEASURES ON OIL WOULD BE EFFECTIVE, IN VIEW OF SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVES, DOMESTIC PRODUCTION AND THE COMPLEXITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL OIL MARKET, AND THAT WE ARE OPPOSED TO INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS THAT ARE UNLIKELY TO BE IMPLEMENTED EFFECTIVELY.

3. AT THE SAME TIME, TO BE CREDIBLE WE CLEARLY NEED MORE FORCEFUL MEASURES THAN THE BRITISH ARE PROPOSING. WE RECOMMEND THAT:

-- WE PERSUADE THE BRITISH TO GO ALONG WITH A MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO, WHICH IS ARGUABLY DISTINCT FROM UNENFORCEABLE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS;

-- WE MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND THE AFRICANS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 190268 TOSEC 080302

THAT WE ARE THROWING ELEMENTS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA INTO THE BALANCE. THIS COULD INCLUDE THE KIND OF MEASURES AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA CONSIDERED AT THE PRC (E.G. REGARDING EXIM CREDITS).

-- IT MIGHT ALSO INCLUDE STRONGER UNILATERAL MEASURES THAN THE VOLUNTARY ACTIONS CONTEMPLATED BY THE BRITISH WITH REGARD TO PRIVATE OIL COMPANIES. THIS COULD INVOLVE AMENDING U.S. SANCTIONS REGULATIONS TO PROHIBIT TRADE WITH RHODSIA BY ALL SUBSIDIARIES OF U.S. OIL COMPANIES.

-- IF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO INSIST THAT SUBSIDIARIES SELL TO ANY BONA FIDE PURCHASER WITHOUT INQUIRING AS TO END USE AND IF SUBSIDIARIES WERE FOUND TO BE PARTICIPATING IN TRADE WITH RHODESIA, OIL COMPANIES MIGHT THEN BE REQUIRED TO SUSPEND SOME OR ALL OF THEIR BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR SOUTH AFRICAN SUBSIDIARIES

-- TO BE EFFECTIVE, AND TO AVOID JUSTIFIABLE COMPLAINTS BY AMERICAN COMPANIES THAT THEY WERE BEING PLACED AT A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE WITH EUROPEAN SUPPLIERS, WE WOULD HAVE TO GAIN AGREEMENT BY THE BRITISH, FRENCH, AND DUTCH,

AND AS MANY OTHER KEY NATIONS AS POSSIBLE, TO TAKE SIMILAR

ACTION. ANY MOVE ON OIL, MULTILATERAL OR UNILATERAL, WILL BE DIFFICULT DOMESTICALLY. ACTING WITH THE EUROPEANS WOULD HELP.

-- WE ARE CHECKING THE LEGAL COMPLEXITIES OF THIS OPTION WITH THE LEGAL ADVISER'S OFFICE. IT WOULD PRESUMABLY ALSO REQUIRED INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT.

-- WE BELIEVE THAT THIS KIND OF FIRM ACTION BY THE AMERICAN AND OTHER KEY GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE ALMOST AS APPEALING TO THE AFRICANS AS UN EFFORTS, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN URGING THIS KIND OF ACTION MORE THAN A UN EMBARGO.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 190268 TOSEC 080302

4. IS ESSENCE, OUR ARGUMENT BOILS DOWN TO THIS. NEITHER UN NOR UNILATERAL ACTIONS WILL PROBABLY STOP SOUTH AFRICA FROM SENDING OIL TO RHODESIA. ACTION ON OIL IS THEREFORE PRIMARILY A POLITICAL GESTURE. A UNILATERAL GESTURE -- BY US AND OTHER KEY NATIONS -- IS MORE MANAGEABLE, LESS LIKELY TO PRODUCE SOUTH AFRICAN OBDURACY, ALMOST AS ATTRACTIVE TO THE AFRICANS, AND AVOIDS PUTTING US ON THE SLIPPERY SECURITY COUNCIL SLOPE.

5. RECOMMENDATION:

(1) THAT YOU ARGUE WITH OWEN FOR INCLUDING A MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO.

(2) THAT YOU EXPLORE WITH HIM THIS MORE FORCEFUL UNILATERAL APPROACH ON OIL, SUBJECT TO FURTHER STAFF WORK ON THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION. STAFF SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER WHETHER RHODESIAN SANCTIONS SHOULD LATER BE EXTENDED TO COVER SUBSIDIARIES OF ALL OTHER U.S. COMPANIES OPERATING IN SOUTH AFRICA, AS WELL. CHRISTOPHER

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